862 "This is just a common, everyday matter," and should not be thought of as giving anyone any trouble. When difficulties do arise an older woman of the compound or the family offers her breast as a pacifier. In the odd case where this does not succeed pressures tighten up. The breast is referred to as "dirty" or specifically as "excreta" and in extreme instances bitter grounds of leaves are put on the breast and the lesson is very quickly learned.

861 863 858 [516] [526] After weaning, pressures are slowly brought to bear to teach the child proper ways of living among its people. Thus, as soon as a child can totter, the adult woman in whose hut he is sleeping starts to enforce the rule that he or she should go outside to perform toilet functions, stoop over with knees bent and buttocks near the ground using only the left hand for any attentions necessary to elimination. Later on as language skills develop the importance of the left hand is more highly emphasized as well as the advisability of being discreet about toilet functions. After the age of two and a half or three, scolding gets more intense and the child is told it is dirty or bad for urinating on the floor. Naturally the severity of the training depends to a large extent as well on the particular situation, the mood and personality of the mother, or other socializing agents present, as well as the age of the child. Thus a grandmother was observed who was not overly excited when her two-year-old grandson urinated on the floor, but she became quite angry when he wet her bed.

861 Patient but continuous teaching by adults in the household is a constant part of everyday activities for the young child. The following excerpt from field notes tells its own story:

> A plate of food is on the floor of the hut gathering flies. The grandmother says to her little grandson, "Kachella, pick up the plate. Now, take it over there. Be careful, there is food on the plate. Now, take that other plate and cover the food over. (Plates are made of grass.) That's right, very good." This simple operation which would have taken the grandmother a few seconds has been carried out after two patient minutes of instruction to the child who could not yet speak more than a few words.

867 868 Childhood also ushers in the establishment of sex roles. Boys are now called "small boys" and girls are "small girls" or "three heads" referring to the three-pronged hair style of prepubescent girls. Boys and girls wear different clothes and begin fairly soon to associate with members of their own sex and to carry out chores that are specifically for boys or for girls. In play groups based on sex they wander freely about the village or neighborhood of the city gathering like flies to honey at the slightest hint of any excitement, and wandering further afield from their own compound as they get older. The girl comes quickly under the authority of the women of the household especially her own mother if she is brought up at home. She learns the intricacies of preparing food, carrying water, and the ever-present task of grinding millet either at a quern or by pounding it on a large wooden mortar. The boys begin to gather firewood, help with the farming, run messages, gather grass for a horse if there is one, tend the goats and sheep of the compound, and learn the family dry-season occupation. Pressure to learn these skills is slow but definite. Punishments are rare, but severe. The child is beaten with a rod or whip until neighbors and friends succeed in persuading the parents to cease or desist. Reasons given for the beating often concern the sudden, or con-

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1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

must ask his permission to do anything. To be seen speaking to another man is grounds for divorce. On the other hand a divorced woman is free. She comes and goes as she pleases and speaks to whoever she pleases quite freely. Some women quite frankly remark that they prefer this status to that of marriage while others just as strongly remark that they would like to get a husband.

In summary, maturity is a time of achievement for men in which they become full-fledged members of their community. They marry, try to raise families, and become heads of successful and productive households. Women try to marry successfully and hopefully to have children. However, as I have pointed out elsewhere, tensions caused by the demands of subordination in their married role produce strains and rebelliousness that very often leads to the break-up of marriage.[3] In the final analysis the culture is androcentric; there are many means by which men can become successful—through their occupation, their associations with neighbors, relatives, friends, and important men, and through membership and finally headship of a household. In spite of a turnover in wives associated with the high amount of divorce, the household itself is a stable unit, although its personnel is not. On the other hand, it is the rare Kanuri woman who can achieve a successful adulthood. Many women are barren or have had children who have not survived. Very few women remain married to the same men all their lives and most have had one or more extended periods of being divorced and looking for a husband. By centering on men and emphasizing their needs and wishes, Kanuri culture has produced a strain on women that is a fertile field for changes when modernization produces the possibility of new goals for women and new means for achieving them.

Old Age

Old age is signalled in both sexes by the whitening of body hair even though other body characteristics may remain strong and healthy. For both old men and women this last period in life means that many of the obligations and responsibilities of adult life are slowly relinquished, although men generally feel that they belong to the adult roles much longer than women. As heads of households and office holders in governmental positions, men wield powers in a number of spheres and give these up slowly and reluctantly as old age drains away their energy and efficiency. Ideally in Kanuri culture a man should reach the golden years of his life in his old age. If all goes well he receives much respect: his work is carried on by descendants, and his position as a household head may have grown to the point where he is the senior authority among a group of households organized along the lines of a patrilocal extended family with clients, sons, brothers, and their wives and families looking to him for leadership. When he is very old and becoming progressively infirm, he lets many of these duties pass to mature members of the group. Even then they always consult him on decisions and pay heed to his wishes.

The reality in Kanuri society is often far from the ideal although the ideal is a very widely agreed upon goal. To obtain this most desirable position in old age a

[3] See Ronald Cohen, "Marriage instability among the Kanuri of Northern Nigeria," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 63, 1231–1249.

829 things when they can be identified as Kanuri. If things get farther away from this Kanuri-ness they can be different from, worse than, or better than, the ideal Kanuri attribute. Thus a Fulani calabash is not good or bad, but it is not Kanuri — it is a different jili (i.e. variety). [826] Facial features, on the other hand, either approach this ideal of Kanuri-ness, which is good, or differ widely from it, which is bad or ugly or not "the pure one" as one English-speaking informant declared. Customs, objects, morals, etiquette, dress, in fact the whole gamut of Kanuri-ness which is generally speaking evaluated as good. In some respects, for example, the Kanuri practice of asking for things continually from others or the widespread practice of adultery, this ideal Kanuri-ness is not the summum bonum. Nevertheless even when informants exclaim Kai Kanuri dibi dea (Wow! Kanuri are wicked) in response to some story of adultery or immorality in general, there seems to be a certain amount of pride expressed in this judgement because of the Kanuri flavour of the misdemeanor.(1)

177 The Bornu Emirate has throughout its long history always had contacts with other ethnic groups both within and beyond its borders. [162] Although the Kanuri are the majority group in Bornu, they are in constant contact with many other ethnic groups, especially in the larger centres. 142 563 Almost every town of over one thousand population has a pagan ward; slightly larger centres have a Hausa quarter, and often politically dependent (settled) Fulani or Shuwa hamlets nearby. Larger towns like Maiduguri, Nguru, Geidam, Dikwa or Damaturu have Ibo, Yoruba and sometimes European trading residents living in the town as well. Maiduguri, the

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(1) The Kanuri word dibi means bad, wicked, immoral in one sense. However, it can also be used as an expression of wonder, delight or amazement. For example, it could be elicited from a peasant on his first experience with a typewriter, or the insides of a camera.

162 563 capital, has, besides all these, a large Arab-speaking population from the Near East and the Sudan as well as the European Reservation for commercial and government personnel.

563 829 In this situation of constant confrontation and to some extent interaction with other ethnic groups, evaluation of status by ethnic membership takes place. The Kanuri vary widely in their disposition to rank own-group as having the highest status among all the other peoples that they are in contact with or about whom they have any information. Almost universally Europeans are accorded high status (sometimes higher than own-group) as an ethnic group. This stems from their superior political and economic positions as administrators and traders. Thus, informants, unless they are well travelled or sophisticated city dwellers, are shocked and surprised to hear that there are prisons in England which house murderers, thieves and scoundrels, or that there are people in England who can be classed as labourers. In their eyes and experience, Englishmen have never been low status persons. Indeed one of the common expressions among the peasants is "Nasara Mai" (Europeans are kings). One informant, during a discussion of religious edicts on morality and the relation of these to the practicalities of everyday life, interjected a surprising comment on the relation of morality to life. He claimed that the only true Muslims in the world were Englishmen, since they were the only people who ever told the truth.

The Arabas (i.e. Arabic speakers, with the exception of the Shuwa nomads) like the Europeans, have very little but formal social contacts with the Kanuri and are highly rated as an ethnic group. The Arab facial features and skin colour are the models for what is the most attractive and pleasing (therefore the ideal Kanuri) physical types. The

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793 228, arziyi) and their birth. There are mallams who form part of the
[565] highest ranking status group in the state as well as peasant and beg-
gar mallams. Each political leader of any size has his own mallams
[693] attached to his organization, as do many powerful men. Since Koranic
knowledge is also legal knowledge the judiciary is a specialized,
high status sub-group of mallams.

556 Beneath the political and religious occupations lie the
[565] broad base of peasant or commoner roles, which are differentiated
[441] primarily on the basis of material success. Among these occupations
it was observed that the role of wealthy trader obtained the highest
status. This is due to its being the most lucrative in comparison to
554 all other non-political occupations. Traditionally, the occupation of
829 butcher, blacksmith, tanner, petty broker, and barber are accorded
shame (nungu) status in relation to other positions, while drummer-
entertainers are also considered low status people who have no proper
sense of dignity.

Informants defined shame status of occupations by whether or not it would be shameful for a "decent" free person whose father was a mallam or a political leader to take up the job, aside from reasons of economic necessity (knansako) which (allegedly) excuses the role occupant from shame. The reasons given for shame (nungu) occupations (1) are as follows:

[826] (a) butcher - he cuts animals, mallams who do this are bad mallams; he takes life for money; he smells of blood (the Kanuri equate blood closely with life, soul and personal power).

(b) blacksmith - they made arms for the enemies of the Prophet.

(c) tanner - they smell badly; their work smells unpleasantly; only a man with no proper shame could do such work.

(1) Composite statement from informants.